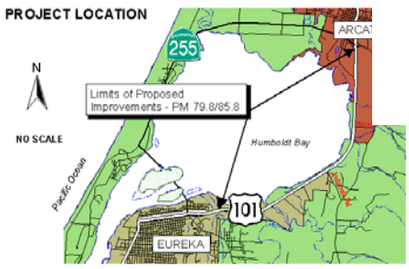


FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FACT SHEET
PROPOSED EUREKA TO ARCATA ROUTE 101 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Caltrans

HCAOG

FHWA

Q; WHY IS A PROJECT NECESSARY?

There are six existing median openings within a three-mile distance (Cole Ave was closed in summer 2003). Due to the high collision rates on some of these intersecting roads, a project is needed to improve safety at these intersections. In Year 2001, the average daily traffic (ADT) on this segment was 37,500 vehicles per day. This is expected to increase to almost 55,000 vehicles per day by Year 2031. With the predicted increase in usage, there will be increased delays for turning and merge movements at intersecting access points as well an increase in the number of collisions. The existing left merge movements have collision rates up to three times greater than the right merge movements. A project is necessary to reduce collisions, operational conflicts and delay at intersections within the corridor.

Q: WHAT ARE THE PROJECT ALTERNATIVES BEING STUDIED?

1. Close all median crossings; lengthen right side acceleration and deceleration lanes.
2. Close all median crossings, construct interchange at Indianola Road, lengthen right side acceleration and deceleration lanes. Currently there are three interchange types under study, a single point interchange, a compact diamond interchange, and a compact diamond interchange with a roundabout intersection on Indianola Road - see back side of this flyer).
3. "No build"- Alternative would propose no modifications to the existing alignment or access for this project. However, other projects to preserve the safety and operation of the facility would continue on a case by case basis.

Q: WHEN WOULD THE PROJECT BE CONSTRUCTED?

The earliest it is anticipated that project construction could start would be in 2012.

Q: THE SAFETY CORRIDOR SEEMS TO BE WORKING FINE, WHY NOT LEAVE THAT IN PLACE LONG TERM?

As traffic volumes increase in the future and there are fewer gaps for crossing, the safety corridor is not expected to function as well. The safety corridor is only effective as the traveling public complies with the posted speed. By definition, a safety corridor in place indicates the need for improvements at a given location. A safety corridor is not an effective long term solution. Caltrans will continue to monitor the safety corridor on an annual basis.

Q: WHY DOES CALTRANS STATE THAT SIGNALS WILL NOT BE USED IN THE CORRIDOR?

On the average, traffic signals at intersections experience about twice the number of collisions than that of unsignalized intersections. Due to limited access, and the rural nature of the corridor, drivers do not expect traffic signals and thus there could be an even greater potential for serious collisions. Due to the large, and growing volumes of traffic on this highway, the safety and liability concerns, as well as concerns regarding the possible diversion of traffic to adjacent roads, signals are not supported by Caltrans.

Q: WHY NOT JUST INSTALL SIGNALS AND LOWER SPEEDS BETWEEN EUREKA AND ARCATA SINCE SPEEDS ARE ALREADY REDUCED THROUGH EUREKA?

Route 101 serves both regional and interregional traffic and any action taken should not impede mobility or safety. The goal of this project is to improve safety and to keep traffic flowing smoothly between the two cities. Signals would not do that. Additionally, it is not desirable to divert traffic to adjacent roads, which would be the likely outcome of such action.

Q: WHAT IS THE CONCEPT OF THE CORRIDOR AND WHY?

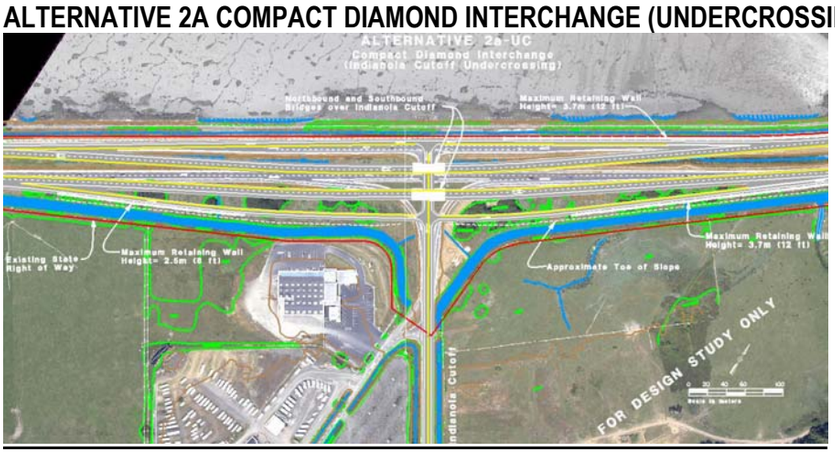
The concept for Route 101 at this segment is a four-lane expressway. Expressways are best equipped to handle high speed, high volume commuter traffic when compared to two lane roads such as Old Arcata Road and Route 255, which have narrower shoulders, no medians and which go through small communities such as Jacoby Creek and Manila.

Q: IF THIS PROJECT IS NOT CONSTRUCTED, WHAT IMPROVEMENTS MIGHT BE MADE INSTEAD?

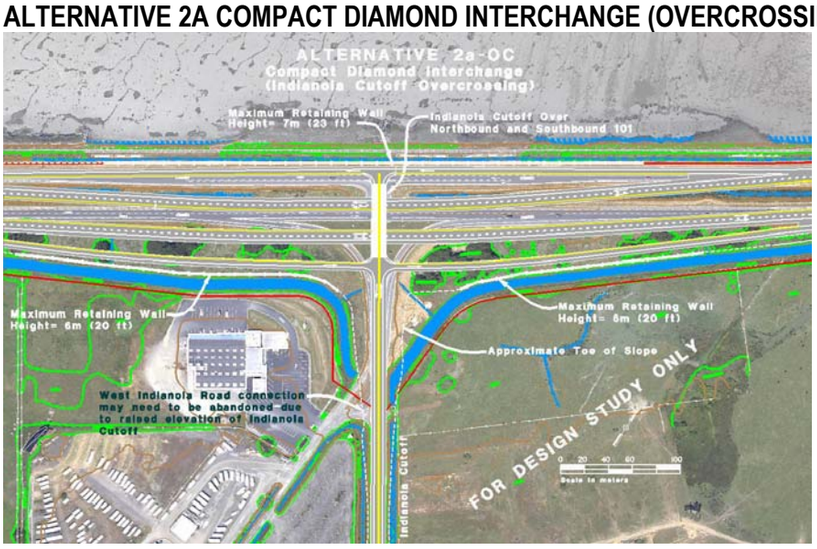
Safety and operational improvements are needed in the corridor. Caltrans currently has a rehabilitation project that is fully funded to make improvements that will serve to protect and preserve the highway system in the corridor. Those improvements include bridgework, intersection work (which could include closing all or some median openings) removing fixed objects within the clear recovery zone, and pavement rehabilitation work

ALTERNATIVE 2 - INTERCHANGE CONFIGURATIONS (FOR DESIGN STUDY ONLY)

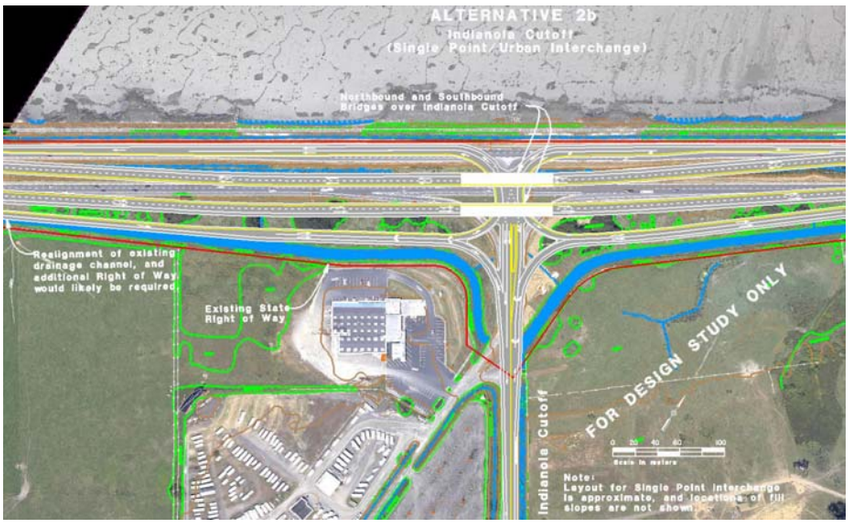
ALTERNATIVE 2A COMPACT DIAMOND INTERCHANGE (UNDERCROSSING)



ALTERNATIVE 2A COMPACT DIAMOND INTERCHANGE (OVERCROSSING)



ALTERNATIVE 2B SINGLE POINT INTERCHANGE



ALTERNATIVE 2c INTERCHANGE W/ ROUNDABOUT ON INDIANOLA ROAD